

South Dakota National Guard

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Participants of Golden Coyote experience river crossing

By Spc. Rebecca Glidden - 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CHAMBERLAIN, S.D. – Military units participating in the South Dakota National Guard's 33rd annual Golden Coyote training exercise experienced a river crossing operation on the Missouri River near Chamberlain, June 10-11.

The river crossing signals the start of the two-week exercise hosted every June in the Black Hills of South Dakota, where units traveling from the eastern United States have the opportunity to experience float bridge operations.

The mission is executed by Soldiers of the 200th Engineer Company, SDNG, and gives them the opportunity to practice their skills and gain experience working with units from across the country.

"We are rafting other units across the river so they can continue onto their mission for Golden Coyote," said Staff Sgt. Jenny Holzer, beach master of the 200th. "Different units come to the beach, we raft them across safely, and then our groups come back and we wait for the next unit who wants to cross."

When units arrive to cross the river, the raft crew guides their trucks onto one of four rafts. The raft commander then directs two boat operators to maneuver the raft across the river to the opposite shore. The trucks are then unloaded to continue on with the mission.

"This lets other units know what we actually do and if the situation arises in real life, they know what we are capable of," said Holzer. "Showing them that we can get them across the river if the interstate was [blocked] is a way that they can continue on their mission."

Golden Coyote provides participants an opportunity to train in an environment that may simulate what they might experience during a deployment.

"When there is choppy water, like today, we don't usually get to do this, so that experience is really taking a toll on our equipment and our people are getting the experience that they need," said Holzer. "We have had these situations before where the water was choppy and having this experience will benefit us when we go on a deployment."

A large-scale operation like this requires the engineer company to coordinate with everyone who plans to cross the river. The river crossing operation provides a unique experience for all those who participate in the operation.

"It is always fun, you meet new people, you make new friends, it's always fun," said Sgt. Maria White, the 137th Transportation Company, Kansas National Guard. "It brings up moral and makes Soldiers appreciate the motto: one team, one fight."

High-resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



170610-A-FF309-0134: U.S. Army Spc. Shane Semmens, 200th Engineer, South Dakota Army National Guard, operates a Mk2 Bridge Erection Boat during a river crossing operation in support of the Golden Coyote training exercise, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. The Golden Coyote exercise is a three-phase, scenario-driven exercise conducted in the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming, which enables commanders to focus on mission essential task requirements, warrior tasks and battle drills. (U.S Army photo by Spc. Kevin Kim)



170610-A-FF309-0009: U.S. Army Soldiers with the 200th Engineer, South Dakota Army National Guard, load military vehicles from the 1138th Transportation Company, Missouri Army National Guard, on to an Improved Ribbon Bridge during a river crossing operation in support of the Golden Coyote training exercise, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. The Golden Coyote exercise is a three-phase, scenario-driven exercise conducted in the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming, which enables commanders to focus on mission essential task requirements, warrior tasks and battle drills. (U.S Army photo by Spc. Kevin Kim)



170610-A-NN123-0329: U.S. Army Soldiers with the 200th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, load military vehicles from the Kansas Army National Guard, on to an Improved Ribbon Bridge during a river crossing operation in support of Golden Coyote, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. The Golden Coyote exercise is a three-phase, scenario-driven exercise conducted in the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming, which enables commanders to focus on mission essential task requirements, warrior tasks and drills. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jeffery Harris)



170610-A-NN123-0277: U.S. Army Soldiers with the 200th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, prepare to load military vehicles from the Kansas Army National Guard on to an Improved Ribbon Bridge during a river crossing operation in support of Golden Coyote, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. The Golden Coyote exercise is a three-phase, scenario-driven exercise conducted in the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming, which enables commanders to focus on mission essential task requirements, warrior tasks and drills. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jeffery Harris)



170610-A-FF309-0071: U.S. Army Spc. Chantal Lewis (left) and Sgt. Tyson Brablee with the 200th Engineer, South Dakota Army National Guard, operate a Mk2 Bridge Erection Boat during a river crossing operation in support of the Golden Coyote training exercise, Chamberlain, S.D., June 10, 2017. The Golden Coyote exercise is a three-phase, scenario-driven exercise conducted in the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming, which enables commanders to focus on mission essential task requirements, warrior tasks and battle drills. (U.S Army photo by Spc. Kevin Kim)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact the SDNG Public Affairs Office at (605) 737-6721 or e-mail ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil